

Strength In Numbers

by yobloc20

Category: Left 4 Dead

Genre: Horror, Romance

Language: English

Characters: Ellis, Francis, Rochelle, Zoey

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2016-04-13 19:19:03

Updated: 2016-04-25 23:26:28

Packaged: 2016-04-27 18:38:17

Rating: M

Chapters: 9

Words: 12,875

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: Just after escaping the mall, the gang of four have their plan halted. When they meet another group of survivors, going through the mental pain of losing a man, joining forces crosses both sides minds. But will the band of four be willing to scrap their plan for the unrealistic chance of safety from the apocalypse in the Florida Keys? Rated M for now. Zellis and possibly Frochelle

1. Obstacles

Hey guys, its Yobloc20 here. This is my first fic so please understand if it's not good, spelling mistakes etc. I always loved Left 4 Dead and Ellis and Zoey are my favourite characters so I thought why not? Please favourite, review and enjoy! P.S. Constructive criticism is approved. Hell, any sort of review is heavily appreciated.

I do not own any of the characters in this story. Valve does.

****Chapter 1: Obstacles****

Everything was quiet. Everything was slowly getting darker.

There was no noise except the slight rhythm of the rain, the gentle wind rustling the leaves of the trees and the shuffling and gurgles of the mindless infected. Debris was littered all over the narrow road which stretched on for a while. The infected simply wandered aimlessly, as if their mind shut off when there wasn't something to chase. Others lay motionless on the cracked road or the leafy grass, starved and unresponsive.

But suddenly, _something_ caught their interest.

Two sources of lights quickly advancing closer from the end of the long road. A faint humming noise gradually getting louder the closer

it was getting. The infected on the ground jumped up and stared at the lights which were getting closer. Their eyes reflected off the beams of light. It was getting closer and closer. The noise was quite audible now. They started to run at the advancing object. The infected let out snarls of hunger and rage. Then with a swift roar, the two lights passed in a flash of fluorescent blue. The noise died down again gradually to the previous hum. The lights were gone. The infected gave chase but quickly lost interest. Then as if nothing happened, they started wandering again.

"I'll never get used to how their eyes look in the dark."

"Huh?"

"The zombies, the way their eyes, like, shine. Makes 'em look like a wild animal. Creeps me the hell out."

"Damn, you got that one right boy. Like a feral animal or some shit."

Ellis was driving the car. He insisted one hundred times at the mall. As long as it made him stop whining about it, the other three were fine with it. Everyone could tell the mechanic was having the time of his life while he was behind the wheel of his hero's stock car.

Coach was in the passenger seat. Every once in a while he would warn Ellis of an incoming piece of debris just incase Ellis didn't see it. They had sat in silence for around thirty minutes before Ellis brought up that previous thought to Coach. There was an odd atmosphere in the car, as if the four survivors all had a big argument with each other and they were now ignoring one another. Ellis knew it. Coach knew it. Ellis was simply trying to get a conversation going to kill the strange mood in the car.

Nick and Rochelle were seated in the back of the stock car. Rochelle had her elbow up against the door; she was gazing out the window up at the sky, lost in thought. Nick had his arms crossed, his head against the window and his eyes shut. Whether he was actually asleep or he was trying to give the impression he was, the other three didn't know. But they all knew that they should leave him alone for now and let him have his rest.

"How you holding up Ellis?" Coach enquired to the young man. "I still can't believe that I'm driving Jimmy Gibbs Jr.'s stock car! This is been a dream o' mine since I was a kid." Ellis replied cheerfully, his signature grin plastered onto his face. Coach chuckled to himself. "I mean are ya tired? I can drive if you wanna sleep." Ellis shook his head. "Nah I'm good. I could drive this beauty for days!" Coach gave him a questionable look before relaxing back into his seat.

"So emâ€¦ Where were ya when ehâ€¦ you knowâ€¦ All this zombie shit started?" Ellis asked with caution, worried that perhaps it was a sensitive issue with the brick wall of a man. Coach sighed and thought. "Ehhmâ€¦ I was driving my car home from a training session with the football team and I got to the highway and it was completely blockedâ€¦ Everyone had gotten outta their cars and some folk were running so I left my car to check what shit was going on and some

people just ran by and told me to haul my ass outta there. I heard screaming in the distance so I didâ€¦ Went back to Savannah." Coach paused for a moment before continuing. "I called my wife as soon as I got the chance. She said she was on her way a CEDA centre at 'the Vannah' hotel with our daughter. I said I would meet her thereâ€¦ I met up with Ro and she was headed that way anyway so we went together. And that's when we met you and Nick. I don't know where they are, I'm just praying they were evaced and they're okay." There was a moment of silence before Rochelle commented "I'm sure they got out and they're okay Coach." Coach gave a small smile. "I sure as shit hope so Ro."

Coach turned back to Ellis "So what about yourself, boy?" Ellis gave a moment of thought. "Well uhh, I was in my garage with Keith actually. We were workin' away on this beauty of a car when we heard this commotion goin' on outside. We saw people running and the radio we had on just went to static and a message started to play about going to your nearest CEDA evac centre. Me and Keith thought to hell 'bout that and we started workin' on this truck we had, ya know, makin' it one hundred percent zombie proof!" Coach gave Ellis a funny look before the mechanic continued.

"We set off and well it turns out it was only ninety-nine point nine percent zombie proof. Bastards ripped it up in a matter of seconds. Me and Keith escaped and he ran one way and I ran the other. I sure hope he's okay but I dunnoâ€¦ Not too long later I found Nick."

Coach gave a small chuckle. "From all the ridiculous stories of the pain and nonsense Keith has gone through, I'm sure an apocalypse is nothing to him!" Ellis gave a laugh. "Yeah Coach! Maybe you're right man!" The mood was now replaced with a cheery atmosphere much to the relief of Coach, Ellis and Rochelle. The rain was getting heavier now.

The headlights then picked up a figure in the middle of the road. Ellis gave a quick look at Coach and then returned his gaze onto the road with a massive smile. "Hey Coach. Watch this!" Ellis remarked as he put his foot on the accelerator. The car roared and sped at the figure. A huge smash was heard and the body tumbled over the windscreen and rolled off onto the road behind. Coach and Ellis started laughing hysterically to themselves. Rochelle looked startled but gave a small grin. Unfortunately, a certain conman was not so impressed by his rude awakening.

"What the hell are you idiots doing?!"

Coach and Ellis looked at each other with a look of immediate regret. They had just woke the viper. "Uhh sorry Nick we just hit a zombie." Nick wasn't having that as a viable excuse. "Are you watching the goddamn road? You can't go ramming into everything you want Overalls!" Ellis looked crestfallen. "Uh yeah sorry Nickâ€¦" Ellis muttered. Nick let out a large sigh. "Anyone know where we are?" Coach shrugged while Rochelle chimed in "I think I saw a sign not so long ago that said Rayford or something?" Coach seemed to light up at that word "Rayford?! Shit! We're on the right track then!" Nick and Rochelle looked confused. "How would you know that?" Questioned Nick who seemed unconvinced. "You can cut right through Rayford to get to the highway which will take us right to Naw'leans!" Replied Coach. Nick sighed at how Coach pronounced 'New Orleans' but a relieved grin

appeared on his face. "Okay, I hope you're right big guy."

Ellis gave an ear-to-ear smile. "Next stop! Rayford!"

2. Spanner in the Works

Hello again! Yobloc20 here. I'm going to try to update as much as I can but if I don't I guess I can blame it on school and friends or just being plain lazy XD Anyway let's get right into it shall we? Please favourite, review and enjoy!

Chapter 2: Spanner in the Works

"So that's Rayford then, huh?"

"Shit, I guess so Nick."

The group looked out from atop a grassy hill. There was a thick blanket of trees behind them. They had pulled in for a better view of where they were planning to manoeuvre through. There were only a few dots of light around the town. The rain was still pounding down.

"Alright, we need to cross that there river and drive to the other side of town and out, okay y'all?" Coach explained to the other three survivors. All three nodded back in return. The group knew the risks of cities and towns. Cities equal people. People equal zombies. But in this circumstance, they believed it was inevitable they cut through a few if necessary. The port town looked large enough. Nick didn't feel good about the plan.

"Okay people, I don't have a good feeling about this." Nick began. "No messing around in there. We go through quickly and quietly."

"Sorta hard to 'quickly and quietly' in a high powered race car Nick. It's one or the other." Ellis retorted. Coach and Rochelle had to hold in their laughter.

"Whatever. Just get us out of Rayford alive, Overalls." Nick replied, an edge of irritancy on his voice.

"Can we get a move on guys? I'm freezing to death in this rain." Rochelle asked.

All four climbed back into the fluorescent blue car and it jolted back to life. "Aw I missed you too." Ellis cooed. The other three shot him a questionable look.

"I think you like this car ****too**** much Ellis." Nick commented but got no response. The car backed up carefully before speeding onto the road into the town.

Rayford was eerily silent. The town which used to be filled with such life and noise was now completely dead and deserted. Except for a stock car slowly rolling right through an empty street. Ellis was cautious about making too much noise. The other three scanned the passing alleyways for any signs of life. The car was silent, waiting for someone to make the call out any movement outside the car. The

rain smashing off the car made the group nervous. It was getting difficult to look out the windows with the rain running down them. "I can't see a goddamn thing." Rochelle commented in a near whisper. "Just keep it together y'all." Coach encouraged, trying to stop any panic from growing.

The car then came to a stop.

"Why are we stopping overalls?" Nick enquired.

"Uhh guys? You see that thing too right?" Ellis questioned staring out the windscreen. The four stepped out of the car and shocked by what they saw.

"Is that a - a bridge?" Rochelle asked.

In front of the survivors was a huge, looming structure which made out the shape of a bridge. It was massive, metallic and it was a big problem.

"Where is the - you know â€" the actual bridge part?" Nick questioned with concern.

"From the look of it, up there." Coach pointed high up the structure where they saw the raised bridge.

"Are you ****_serious_****?! What asshole raised the goddamn bridge? Son of a bitch!" Nick exploded with anger.

"This isn't happeningâ€¦| This isn't happeningâ€¦| This isn't happening." Rochelle repeated over to calm herself down.

"Maybe we could find another route?" Ellis suggested. Unfortunately, an already raging Nick was not in the mood for Ellis and his useless attempts to find a solution.

"No Ellis! No, we can't just find another goddamn route! This is the-

_"__Can I help you by any chance?"_ A rough voice shouted from somewhere.

All four quickly pulled out whatever weapon they had on them and stood back-to-back, all startled by the voice.

"Up here! On the bridge!" The voice yelled again.

The four survivors craned their necks up towards the bridge. A man in mostly black was leaning against the rail of the catwalk. He had a shaved head.

"Can I help you guys?" He repeated.

"Yeah, by any chance could you lower the bridge? We need to get across." Coach explained

The man shook his head. "No can do. Sorry."

"Is this a joke?! Lower the goddamn bridge!" Nick yelled up at the man, frustration evident on his voice.

"Bite me, Colonel Sanders." Rochelle couldn't help herself but stifle a laugh.

"Lower the goddamn bridge, you greasy vest wearing monkey!" Nick retorted.

"Gentlemen!" Rochelle interrupted the argument which wasn't helping their cause. She turned back to the man. "Listen, I'm sorry about him! Are you sure you can't lower the bridge?"

"Hell yeah! I'll help ****_you_**!**" The man replied, causing Rochelle to blush a little.

"__Francis? Who are you talking to?"_ Another voice called from out of view. It was a female's.

A girl walked on the catwalk and stood beside the man. She was much smaller than him. She was wearing a red jacket and dark blue jeans with black sneakers. Her brown hair was in a ponytail. She looked down at the group before looking back at the man. She looked wide eyed and shocked.

Nick looked over at Ellis and saw he was staring at the girl with his mouth wide open.

The two were having a conversation with each other. She then looked back down before saying "Please give us a minute!" Before both left the catwalk and went out of view.

"So what do we do now?" Nick questioned.

"We wait." Coach replied.

3. Altercations

Hey guys, its Yobloc20 here. Sorry about the last chapter being rather short and badâ€¦ I wanted to get a new chapter out fast so I rather rushed it. This one will be longer. Favourite, review and enjoy! All characters belong to Valve.

****Chapter 3: Altercations****

"We should let them up here! Negotiate with them; see if there is another way we could help them!"

"Let them up here? No way. I don't trust that jackass in the suit."

Zoey rolled her eyes. "We can't just leave them down there!"

"We don't have to let them up here either." Francis muttered.

Zoey gave a heavy groan. "Louis! Back me up here! We should let them up here! Right?" Zoey questioned with a raised eyebrow.

Louis gawked at Francis and Zoey. They were both staring back at him with the belief that he would side with them. Louis knew that getting on either one's bad side was an unpleasant experience, to say the

least.

However, Louis just shrugged. "I'm not sure. You both have good points. We can't just leave them down there but we just met these people! How do we know they're not just playing us on?" There was a few seconds of silence before Zoey replied. "They want to cross the bridge. Not rob us." Louis thought about it. "Maybe you're right. Tell them to come to the other side of the bridge. We can talk more clearly there." Zoey nodded and gave a victory smile. She loved being right.

However, Francis was still not convinced.

"What happened to everything Bill said, _looking after our own_?" He questioned, causing the mood in the room to turn poisonous. "Are we just saying to hell with that?"

"You shut the ****fuck**** up right now." Zoey snapped from behind gritted teeth. She stormed out of the building and back onto the catwalk. Francis shook his head before commenting "I didn't mean to sound so-

"I know Francis. Zoey is still hurting over Bill. You should apologize to her." Francis sighed. "I knowâ€|"

Francis missed the old man. A lot more than the other two thought. He missed his leadership, the joking around they had, his advice. Hell, even _his presence _gave the group confidence in knowing they had a war veteran in their ranks_. _Francis hated making difficult decisions because he was so used to Bill making the tough calls. Things had been rather difficult since Bill's demise. The group of three didn't speak much of him even though they thought about him all the time. His death was especially rough on Zoey. The young woman was forced to watch her mother turn after she was attacked and she had to put her infected father out of his misery. Zoey became attached to Bill as she saw him almost as a father figure and his departure was still a very sore subject with her.

Hopefully, she wasn't too pissed off at him.

****_Back at the bridge_****

"You have _got _to be kidding me, Overalls."

"Nah man! She is the most beautiful girl I've ever seen!"

Nick let out a hurtful laugh as Coach stepped forward with a big grin on his face.

"Shit boy, where you gonna take her on your first date?"

"I gotta learn to actually be able to talk to her Coach." Ellis replied with dead seriousness, causing Coach and Nick to start laughing hysterically again. The rain didn't look like letting up.

"Would you two leave him alone?" Rochelle commented. "Ellis, just be your own sweet self, okay?" She added. Ellis nodded and fiddled with his cap in his hands.

"Well speak of the devil." Coach spoke up. "Here's your angel right now boy."

"Hello again!" She called down.

"Hey. What's the verdict then?" Nick enquired.

"I'm really sorry guys! You're gonna have to come over to the other side of the bridge, we can talk easier over there and maybe we can negotiate a deal or something! I'm really sorry!"

Coach sighed. "Still don't wanna drop the bridge?"

Zoey nodded. "I'm afraid so."

Nick wasn't happy about this, as he usually wasn't when things didn't go his way. "Listen, maybe bring the guy back out! He knew what he was talking about!" He shouted up. Coach cursed something about Nick under his breath while Rochelle glared at him.

Rochelle was a nice, kind woman who always put others concerns ahead of her own. Oh, and she can give one hell of a dead arm which Nick unfortunately found out. He scowled and rubbed his arm.

"I could _shoot you where you stand._" Zoey replied with venom.

Nick just gave a nervous laugh. "I was just joking! Geez, can anyone take a joke anymore?"

Ellis tried to speak up. "Do-don't worry a-a-about him ma'am. He is just - he is just a bit annoyed is all."

Zoey barely understood what the young man said but she got the message. "It's alright! You should probably get moving!"

"What about the um, the car?" Ellis asked.

Zoey smiled. "It's okay. We'll make sure it's stays safe."

Ellis didn't seem completely thrilled but he knew he couldn't stay there. "Alright, we best be on our way! See you on the other side!" Coach yelled.

"Okay, see you there! Good luck!" She walked back out of view again.

The four survivors strolled over to the trunk of the race car and opened it, revealing their armoury of weapons.

Coach took his semi-automatic SPAS-12 and wrapped his chainsaw around his holster via a wire. His P220 pistol was already in his holster. Ellis strapped his P79 Grenade Launcher on his back with his MSG901 Sniper Rifle in his hands. A bloody baseball bat was tied to his waist. Rochelle grabbed her FN-SCAR Rifle and she shoved her beloved Desert Eagle into its holster. Nick took his AK47 Rifle and had a frying pan swinging from his belt. The group was stocked and ready to go.

"What are we waiting around for?" Nick enquired and got no response. "Alright, let's go."

"Ellis, keep your mind on the zombies, not the girl." Advised Coach.

With that, the group jumped off the ledge beside the road down into a bench area and started picking off infected as they came at the group.

Zoey heard the gunfire from the catwalk on the other side of the bridge. She sighed and thought about the group.

She was so happy to actually see another woman. A nice one at that. The large man seemed to be their leader and he gave the impression of a sensible man. The suited man was an asshole, but perhaps he was just having a bad day. The young man though, she couldn't quite put a finger on what he was like. He didn't speak very often and when he did, he stuttered so much that she could barely understand him. She remembered him calling her 'Ma'am' which made her grin. He was obviously courteous and well mannered. He seemed like a nice and friendly guy. Zoey let out another as she reset her eternal ponytail.

_"__I hope they make it here okay"__

4. Letting go

Hey guys, its Yobloc20 here. Thanks for the nice reviews! I honestly didn't expect to get anyâ€¦ I'll try to make longer chapters I promise :) Anyway onwards with the story. Valve owns all the characters.

****Chapter 4: Letting go****

"You know, I thought the actual streets were bad. I thought the _zombie wedding _was bad. But this shitty Under the River tour? Oh it takes the goddamn cake!"

The wedding the group had stumbled across not too long ago was a depressing sight for the whole group. Especially the witch bride which they barely managed to sneak by.

"Give it a rest Nick, would ya? We gotta keep moving." Coach grunted, tired of the conman and his constant complaining and whinging. He fired his automatic shotgun at an advancing zombie.

"No I'm serious! Who would ever take time out of their day to come down into this shithole! I mean this place was already bad when-

"Hey Nick, you got a turd on your shoulder." Ellis bluntly informed the conman. Whether this was an attempt to shut Nick up or there actually** was** a turd on his shoulder was unknown. Nick didn't want to know. The other two laughed.

"I'm not looking."

A few infected ran out of the dark but were quickly dispatched with their combined gunfire of the survivors.

The group came up to a concrete platform with a ladder on the side. All four hauled up the ladder and took a minute to catch their breath. Wading through sewage was not an easy task. Beside them was a walkway which led out into the unclear distance.

"Is that the right way out of here?" Rochelle asked, wanting to get out of this underground 'tour' as quickly as possible.

"Ro, you're guess is as good as mine." Coach replied.

"I don't see 'nother way. This is our only option I guess." Ellis stated while his hands were busy reloading his sniper rifle.

"Alright, let's go." Coach walked to the gates before turning around and smiling.

"Hey Nick, looks like we're back in the water." Coach chuckled. The first section of the walkway had collapsed into the water. "That sums up my luck recently." Nick muttered.

Coach pressed the button to open the gate. Unfortunately, a bell sounded, the ringing echoing all around the sewer. "Great, just greatâ€¦ Of course the gate has an alarm." Rochelle mumbled in frustration. A shriek sounded out from the infected in the near distance.

"C'mon, we gotta turn that alarm off!" Coach barked as he jumped into the filthy water again. Ellis turned back to Nick with a grin.

"What? Are you afraid of a little water or something Nick?" He sarcastically questioned with a huge smile and leaped into the water after Coach and Rochelle.

"I hate you Ellis!"

****Back at the Bridge****

Francis looked at the young woman from a distance. She had her head in her hands as she leaned against the railing. He felt awful. He didn't want to startle her so he walked up to her, making his footsteps quite audible. She looked up at him before quickly wiping her eyes with her sleeve.

She had been crying.

"Hey" Francis said awkwardly. He didn't know what else to say besides that. Zoey didn't respond.

"I'm sorry for sounding so harsh earlier. You know I didn't mean it." He stated. She nodded.

"I know." She responded, almost a whisper. She cleared her throat.

"I know you don't like bringing it up. We all miss him Zo. We know you especially." He commented in a rather soft voice considering he was a tough, bar fighting biker. But he continued.

"He's in a better place Zo. He died a hero. _He died for us._ He doesn't have to deal with this crappy world anymore. He's no longer

tired or hurting or sore. He's happy now."

He could see Zoey's eyes begin to get glassy again. She quickly wiped the tears away again, hoping he wouldn't notice. Zoey didn't like others seeing her cry. It made her feel weak.

"And he doesn't have to climb any more stairs." Francis added with a smile. Zoey gave a small giggle before looking at him.

"Thanks Francis. Thanks a lot." She said with a smile.

There was a brief pause before Francis made another statement. "We should lower the bridge." He highly expected Zoey to strongly disagree but to his surprise, she nodded. "Yeah, we should." Francis shot her a smile. This was the first step to recovery.

Letting go.

"Sorry for being a bitch." She said. Francis shook his head. "Nah, you weren't at all. Now come on. You'll freeze out here in the rain."

The two walked back to the building together. Zoey felt better.

Francis always knew how to cheer her up.

****Back with the others****

The four survivors trudged into the saferoom. Tired, beaten and filthy. Ellis slammed the door shut behind them before moving a table in front of it for good measure.

"Never. Again." Nick panted, exhausted from the run to turn off the alarm.

"Since when did they alarm goddamn sewer gates?!" Rochelle asked, trying to catch her breath. There was a moment where the only noise in the saferoom was all four survivors' attempts to recapture their breath.

"I swear to God." Nick began. "They ****better ****lower that goddamn bridge after ****that ****shitstorm." That was concern the other three had completely forgot about. They had just gone through hell for the possible chance to be told to turn back around and find another way to New Orleans. They suddenly began to dread meeting up with the other survivors again incase their worst fears were to be confirmed. But not Ellis.

Ellis could not wait to see the other group again. To see that girl again. He had thought about her the whole way. He was fairly still fairly nervous but he promised himself he wouldn't become a tongue-tied mess on their second encounter. Coach and Nick however, had not spared him any mercy about his new 'crush' if you could call it that. They constantly teased and mocked him, Nick being the more frequent. He even went as far as to advise Ellis to grab the dress from the witch bride for future use. Ellis just ignored them.

Coach got up off the table he was resting on and stretched his back. He then picked his SPAS-12 up off the table and gave the group a

look.

"Let's go and meet these guys again."

A/N: Francis and Zoey are in no way romantic in this. They are very close friends and share very personal matters with each other. Just thought I should clear that up incase of any confusion. Thanks for reading!

Yobloc20

5. The Right Track

Hey guys, its Yobloc20 here. I'm really enjoying writing right now so I'm going to upload chapters regularly for the next while! This chapter was difficult enough to write as I'm not great at actually writing action and gunfights but I gave it my best shot XD Please favourite, review and enjoy! Valve owns all of the characters.

****Chapter 5: The Right Track****

The big, makeshift saferoom door slowly creaked open. The barrel of a sniper rifle emerged from the crack.

"All clear?"

"I think so."

The four survivors crept out in single file, Ellis at the front, Coach and Rochelle in the middle and Nick at the back.

"Look! It's the bridge! We made it!" Ellis exclaimed, the other three unsure why he was so happy to see the stupid bridge they all were beginning to loathe. A flight of stairs is all that stood between them and the bridge.

"Damn, _I hate stairs._" Coach wheezed as he began climbing the stairs with considerable fatigue. "_I second that._" Rochelle responded.

When they reached the top, the girl and the man were already waiting for them. The young woman was leaning against the bridge with her arms folded while the man, who everyone now figured out was a biker due to his leather vest and sleeve tattoos, was leaning against the railing. There was another guy with them who they hadn't seen before, he was sitting on the ground with his right leg extended out, the trouser leg was shredded and heavily bandaged. He was a dark skinned with a bald head. He wore a stained white shirt with the sleeves rolled up to his elbow, with black trousers and black shoes. He looked like your typical office worker.

"Hey, you made it!" The girl called out.

"Yeah, we had no trouble at all!" Nick commented, his voice rich in sarcasm. "Hey you never told us there were three of you!" He added, pointing at the office worker.

"Yeah, that's Louis. His leg is a bit screwed as you can see." The

biker informed. "Oh and I forgot to mention, I'm Francis and she's Zoey.

"__Zoey! So that's her name." _Finally Ellis had got her name. It suited her.

Coach did the honours of introducing his group. "Well, you can just call me Coach. The suit is Nick, the girl is Rochelle and the kid is Ellis."

"Is Louis okay?" Rochelle asked. "I'll be alright." Louis replied. "Thanks for asking. Just a run-in with a witch." He had a friendly voice.

"So where are you guys headed?" Francis enquired. "New Orleans. Last survivin' military evac point nearby, apparently." Ellis stated. "You guys wanna come with us? You're more than welcome to."

Francis shook his head. "No thanks dude, we had our fill of the military." The group of four were curious what he meant by 'our fill'.

"What do you mean" Nick said.

Francis sighed. "It's a long story but to put it bluntly, they don't like people like us. We're _carriers. _Wanted us dead. We got out and ended up here."

Nick seemed intrigued by the biker's story. "Is that soâ€|"

"Well guys, we have good news and we have bad news." Zoey said. "The good news first, _please_." Rochelle pleaded, dreading the bad news. "Well we've had a change in heart; we're going to drop the bridge." The young woman informed.

The group of four let out a collective sigh of relief before suddenly realising what the hell the bad news could be.

"The bad news, to actually lower the bridge, you're going to have to gas up the generatorâ€| Which is going to make one hell of a racket."

"Why does everything _never have enough gas? _And why does everything nowadays make _so much goddamn noise? It feels like the generator company knew the apocalypse was coming so they made them make a shit tonne of noise to screw everyone over." Nick conspired which made Louis laugh.

"I have to agree. Sometimes, I sometimes get the feeling that everything was set to screw us over." Louis replied.

For that whole time, Ellis was too distracted to get into the conversation. Every few seconds he would have a quick glance at Zoey. If he thought she was pretty all the way up on the bridge, well she was downright _gorgeous _up close. Unfortunately, Ellis got lost in thought and he realised he had been staring at her.

And she was now looking right back.

Ellis whipped his head back forward without hesitation. "_Shit, now

she's gonna think I'mma creep or somethin'." _He thought to himself. He hoped she didn't notice his extremely red face as he pretended to be checking on his gun.

"So, where did you guys get the car? It's pretty sweet." Francis asked. "At a mall back in Savannah. It was on display. Belonged to a guy named Jimmy Gibbs or something." Rochelle explained. "Oh is that the taco guy? I loved him!" Francis mockingly replied.

"No man! He was only the best damn stock car driver around!" Ellis butted in, a little bit annoyed that his childhood hero was just called a 'taco guy'. Rochelle laughed to herself at how flustered Ellis becomes at someone belittling Jimmy Gibbs.

He could be such a child at times.

"How does she handle?" Francis asked as odd small chat.

"A little to the left." Ellis responded with a grin. There was a brief moment of silence before Louis spoke up. "We should get you on your way. Take the elevator down and we'll cover you from up here on the bridge.

"Alright, sounds like a deal." Coach replied. "Thanks again for doing this." Zoey smiled at him. "Don't worry about it."

The four strolled over to the elevator and Rochelle pushed the button once everyone was in.

"Alright." Coach began. "As soon as these doors open, haul ass and find gas!" The three nodded back in return. "And Ellis, keep your mind on finding gas cans, not the girl on the bridge." Coach said with a smirk.

"Oh ha ha."

The elevator doors slowly opened and the group moved out, Nick ran over to the generator and pressed a few buttons on it. A loud sputtering noise was coughed out of the generator and a few seconds later, the shriek of nearby infected cried out. "It's still got a little gas in it!" Nick informed as he stepped away from the machine and pulled back out his rifle.

The three on the bridge had taken position. Louis was on one of the catwalks, standing behind a Heavy Machine Gun. He looked visibly excited to use it. Zoey was standing on the other catwalk with a Hunting Rifle. "_She looks so badass with that gun._" Ellis thought to himself, he truly believed she was the perfect girl.

Francis stood on the balcony of the building that the bridge joined up with, an AK-47 Rifle cocked and ready in his hands.

"We go in two's!" Coach yelled "Go! Move!" Coach and Rochelle ran through an alleyway on the other side of the street and out of sight. "Let's move, Overalls!" Nick called out before running down the main street and taking a left, Ellis trailing not too far behind.

The street was blocked off however; a large bus was parked in the middle of the road. There was still one building which entrance was still accessible.

"Through there!" Ellis yelled, pointing at the door of the building. Infected were now climbing over the bus which Ellis and Nick held off momentarily with gunfire.

The two burst through the door and closed it right behind them. It looked like a warehouse. There were crates of different sizes everywhere. Ellis thought about cracking a few open to see if there was anything of use inside but a violent banging on the door killed that thought.

"We don't have a lot of time! Keep looking!" Nick barked, urgency evident in his voice.

Ellis ran around the warehouse, but saw no gas cans. How could they expect to find gas cans in a warehouse? The door was now breaking off its hinges.

"Let's get out of here!" Nick yelled. Ellis spotted the loading bay door and ran over to it and frantically pulled tried the door but it wouldn't budge. "Nick what are we going to do? The door is-

Nick casually walked over and pressed a button beside the door which had on it in big, black writing: 'LOADING BAY DOOR'. The door began to slowly ascend.

"_Seriously_?" Nick questioned as Ellis scratched the back of his neck. "Oh I-I didn't see thatâ€|" Ellis explained, clearly embarrassed. The two heard a crash not too far behind their position and knew what it was. _They had gotten through the door._

Nick quickly dropped to the ground and rolled under the small gap the door had produced, Ellis following in suit.

The pair didn't really know where they were, but the noise of a heavy sounding gun pointed them back to where the bridge was. "We got to keep looking!" Nick instructed as he ran out of the alleyway. Neither of the two knew _exactly_ where to start looking for gas. They ran back out onto another street, confused and beginning to get frustrated. They both picked off advancing infected with ease. Suddenly, a coughing noise was heard not too far away.

"You hear that? Smoker. Eyes peeled." Nick warned as he scanned the rooftops. Ellis nodded in response.

The southerner, however, spotted gold. "Nick! Look!" He called out as he swiftly sprinted to a red pickup truck. In the back were two gas cans, filled as near to the top as possible. "_Finally._" Nick sighed with relief. "Let's get these back."

The pair grabbed one can each and made their way back towards the bridge. Perhaps things were starting to look up.

And as if they had just jinxed themselves, something slimy wrapped around Nicks waist and began dragging him back down the street.

"El-Ellis!" The conman wheezed as the air was being crushed out of his body. "He-help!" Ellis had nothing sharp to cut the tongue so he had to go for the Smoker. He followed the tongue up to the roof of a

building with the scope of his sniper. He caught sight of the deformed creature and took aim. Sucking in a breath, the mechanic silenced everything around him and steadied his aim. _Then he let everything release_.

The sound of an explosion on the roof and a poof of smoke confirmed that Ellis had made the shot. He ran over to Nick to check on him, only to find him trying to untangle himself from the Smokers tongue. "Thanks." He panted, catching his breath. "Let'sâ€¦| Let's get back before something else tries to _kill me_."

****Back at the bridge****

The three on the bridge covered Ellis and Nick's return to the generator, with two gas cans.

"Great! You made it back!" Louis yelled down. "Go on and fill it up. We got your back." Nick gave Louis a thumbs up before proceeding to pour the contents of the gas can into the generator.

"Hey ummm Ellis?" Zoey shouted over, gesturing the young man to come closer to her. Ellis was confused as he walked over to the girl of his dreams. She then dropped something at him. He caught it more out of reflex than he was expecting it. It was a bottle of pills. He looked back up at her.

"You're gonna need it." She explained.

Ellis gave her a smile. "Thanks Zoey."

"No problem." She replied while returning the same smile.

The ground began to shake a little. The survivors heard vicious roars in the not-so-far distance. "That can only mean one thing." Nick muttered.

Rochelle came sprinting from around the corner; a gas can in one arm, her Desert Eagle in her hand and a look of fear in her face. "We got a problem." She reported, visually shaken. Coach came bolting from the same corner with a gas can in each arm. "We got a tank!" He yelled as he reunited with the others.

The monster came barreling around the same corner, it was so intimidating and unnaturally massive. _And extremely pissed off_

6. Desperate Times

Hey guys, its Yobloc20 here. I'm happy at how the story is panning out and I have big plans for it. This story will probably be long enough. I will write other one shot stories alongside this (Whenever I start those I'm not too sure.) As for now, I'm going to keep writing chapters and keep progressing with the story! Favorite, review and enjoy! All the characters belong to Valve.

****Chapter 6: Desperate Times****

It didn't take the group long to snap out of their trance of fear and actually open fire at the tank. The beast roared as hails of bullets

pelted against his hard skin, merely a nuisance to the monster. The four on the ground spread out as the tank rumbled its way at them. It suddenly turned its sights on Nick and began eating the ground between itself and the conman.

Nick ran in a loop around the tank and back up the street, wanting to get the tank into Louis' sights so he could lay into the monster with the Heavy Machine Gun. "Louis!" Nick yelled in panic, "For fucks sake! **Shoot**"!

Louis snapped into action and began raining high powered hell on the tank, slowing the beast down. The rest of the survivors joined in and fired at the beast.

The tank showed its pure strength as it ripped a concrete slab from the path on the side of the road and hurled it at the group of four.

Ellis was unfortunately crouching at the front of the group and took the brunt of the hit. He let out a horrible cry of pain, the concrete slab crushing him. Nick and Coach quickly tried to pull the burden off of the young man while Rochelle and the three others continued to fire at the beast as it began to advance at the group of four again.

Much to the relief of the survivors, the tank fell suddenly, defeated, onto the ground, merely a few feet away from the survivors.

Coach and Nick finally succeeded at lifting the concrete off of Ellis. The mechanic groaned in pain holding his arm, which didn't look right at all. The pair lifted him back to his feet. "Are you alright?" Nick asked. Ellis simply shook his head, still holding his arm and wincing in pain. Coach quickly ran over to the generator and started filling it up with the three gas cans himself and Rochelle had acquired.

"Is your friend okay?" Francis asked; a look of concern on his face. "His arm is busted, but I think he'll be okay!" Rochelle responded. Nick took the pills from the boys' waist and opened the bottle, pouring a few onto his palm. "Here, take this. It's all we have right now." Ellis took the pills and swallowed them swiftly. More infected came bolting at the group, their short period of recuperation coming to an end. Nick picked up the mechanics sniper rifle for him and handed it to him. "You think you can shoot?" Ellis took it and seemed to be able to hold it. "Should be." He replied.

"It needs one more!" Coach yelled as he picked back up his SPAS-12 and rejoined the group. Nick kicked the tanks corpse in anger. "Goddamn it!" He cursed; luck was just never on their side. Nick looked over and gestured his head. "Let's get looking." He said bluntly and the two took off in search, Ellis and Coach waiting behind.

"I can't wait to get out of here!" Nick exclaimed, tired and fed-up. "Nothing good has happened since we got to this town."

Nick had a point. The pair advanced, firing into the zombies that lunged at them. The street they were in was fairly empty. Rochelle then came up with an idea. "There was a mechanic's shop not too far

from here!" She remarked. Nick raised an eyebrow, expecting an explanation as to how she would know this. "When Coach and I were on the way back to the bridge, I noticed it out of the corner of my eye." Rochelle explained.

"Good enough for me." Nick stated. The pair set off through an alley, Nick following Rochelle's lead.

****Back at the bridge****

The survivors didn't have much trouble with the infected, the combined firepower of five heavily armed people made it fairly easy. Coach was still concerned about Ellis.

"You holding up okay?" Coach questioned. Ellis shrugged, trying to play it off. "My arm is still pretty sore but I think I'm those pills are workin." Coach lay his hand on the young mans' slumped shoulder. "You'll be okay Ellis." The mechanic gave him a pained grin. "I hope so man."

Up on the balcony, the concern was also rather high. Francis was worried about Rochelle. They had been gone for some time now. He didn't want anything bad to happen to her. Zoey on the other hand, did not like the look of Ellis' arm, it was clearly broken. She hoped Nick and Rochelle would be back soon. She admitted to herself that she liked these guys a lot, even Nick who seemed nice enough when he tried to be. She was worried for them too however. She knew they had to be carriers as well. She knew what the military did with carriers. She also knew this group was walking right into the military's hands. She had to say something. It would be the last straw if she knew she let this group of people go to their inevitable death from the people that were supposed to be saving them. She knew this because the exact same thing happened to her. But she doubted they would listen to her. _But she had to do something._

Two familiar faces came running down the main street, a hoard of infected hot on their heels. Louis began mowing down the zombies, hooting and hollering in the process. "Woo! Yeah! Who's you Daddy?!"

Zoey spotted the lurking hunter ready to pounce and got it right in the head, its body falling limp to the ground as it let out a rather pathetic yelp.

Nick and Rochelle made it to the generator; both with a gas can each, just to be safe. Rochelle filled it up with haste and tossed it to the side when it was empty and pressed a button. The bridge began to make some noise.

"Finally!" Nick yelled as they all walked over the bridge. "Hey, thanks again for the help, couldn't have done that without y'all." Couch began with a smile. "Anytime. I know you would've done the same for us." Louis returned. "Good luck with New Orleans. Stay safe." Francis added. Zoey began to feel extremely guilty as the bridge began to lower.

"Good luck to you too. Thanks for the help." Rochelle commented with a smile. "Yeah, uh goodbye y'all. Thanks for the help." Ellis added. Zoey felt like she was saying goodbye to these people as they left for their certain doom. "Thanks. Sorry I was an asshole earlier."

Nick quickly mentioned. The bridge was now down and the gate began to open with some difficulty. "Em, goodbye and good luck." Is all Zoey could manage to say, she couldn't bring herself to warn them.

The gate of the bridge slammed down and the group of four were ready to make the final stretch back to the Jimmy Gibbs.

Infected began to race to the bridge from the streets and the alleys. Ellis was feeling pretty sad. "_I hope this isn't the last time I see that girl._" He thought to himself. He turned to start running to the car and then he saw it.

Everyone saw it. Everyone's hearts sank when they did.

On the other side of the bridge, was a rampant tank beside the overturned and destroyed Jimmy Gibbs stock car. It saw the group of four.

They were trapped.

7. Rerouted

Hey guys, its Yobloc20 here. Before I begin, I would like to thank Harry-Flashman for giving me some good advice on writing skills which will help a lot so go check his profile out! This chapter is a significant one in the story as you probably can see some emerging problems with the survivors. You might see it after you read it. (Don't worry if you don't, it's subtle enough :P) Favourite, Review and Enjoy! Valve owns all the characters.

Chapter 7: Rerouted

The group just froze. No one knew what to do, where to go. They were trapped between a vast hoard of hungry, snarling infected and a quickly approaching mass of muscle. Time seemed to freeze as each survivors' brain came up blank as to what to do. They were caught. All noise around them was drowned out. They didn't feel the constant rain on their skin anymore. _This was the end._

It was Zoey's shouting that brought them back to reality. "You guys! Deal with the tank!" The girl turned to Francis "You hold the zombies off!" Francis simply nodded and got to work, firing round after round into the crowd.

Zoey then turned to Louis "Louis! The ladder!" She commanded. Zoey found herself taking charge, everyone following her every word. Louis did not hesitate as he quickly hobbled across the catwalk to the other side of the bridge, using the railing as support.

The tank was slowed down at the groups' gunfire, buying them some time. Francis and Zoey began mowing down the advancing zombies. Louis got to the other side and began furiously kicking a latch on the ladder.

The tank was getting much closer. Louis had no choice but to put weight onto his injured leg. He hissed but ignored the pain and continued. The latch snapped off the metal ladder as it loudly slid downwards and landed not too far from the group.

"Get up here quick!" Louis yelled down. Rochelle sprinted over to the ladder and quickly clambered the ladder to safety. "You next, Overalls!" Nick ordered as the mechanic had to climb the ladder with one arm which proved to be a difficult task. All Ellis heard was faint yelling and gunshots. Both the tank and the infected were closing in on them.

Coach moved ahead and began moving up the ladder as Nick spotted the gas can he had brought from the mechanics' earlier. He gave a small grin. "_Burn in hell you freakish bastards." _His FN-SCAR let out a burst of three rounds, each hitting the can and setting it ablaze, proving the infected no longer a threat as they shrieked and screeched as their skin turned a charred black crisp. The conman leisurely climbed the ladder. On his way up, he saw the tank succumb to the fire and topple over, defeated.

When he got to the top, he found the rest of his group sitting on the ground, out of breath. Louis pulled the ladder back up behind him. He seemed to only now realize just how tired he actually was, his legs feeling cramped and sore. Nick sucked in a few breaths before glancing over at Louis. "Thanks. You saved our ass big time." He said in between deep breaths. Louis shook his head and smirked. "Don't mention it. Couldn't just watch you guys die." He responded.

Francis and Zoey came running up the catwalk, guns still in their hands. "Are you guys alright?!" Zoey questioned, looking them over for any immediate serious injuries. "Yeah, thanks to you." Coach remarked as he began to get back to his feet. "We would be dead if it weren't for y'all so thanks a bunch." Ellis added. "Yeah thanks for saving us." Rochelle began. "But we have a big problem. The car is screwed." The group suddenly remembered the tank had destroyed it. Ellis was genuinely close to being in tears. "Ah damn! Shit not the car man!" Nick rubbed his forehead as he sighed. "Great, our ticket to New Orleans is now fucked. Anyone got any other bright ideas?" Nicks' statement was met with silence. Zoey cleared her throat before speaking up.

"You guys could stick with us until you figure it out?" She suggested in a soft voice. Nick shrugged as she gave a look back at her two friends who didn't seem too angry about the idea. "Maybe, how long are you guys staying up here?" Coach asked. "Until we get enough supplies to sail out to the Florida Keys." Francis explained. "The Florida Keys? Why would you wanna go there?" Rochelle questioned.

"We heard it was zombie-free. Maybe we could live out the apocalypse there." Zoey commented. The group of four looked at each other before Coach stated "Yeah, we'll stay with y'all until we figure another way outta here." Zoey nodded while Francis and Louis whispered something to each other and started laughing. The sky was now a vast black and the rain was finally dying down into a lighter beat.

"Alright let's get inside, follow me." Francis said as he started walking back towards the building, with the others following behind him.

The inside of the building was nice enough, it had to be said. They were on the second floor; the stairs that led to the bar downstairs was heavily blocked. The owner of the bar obviously lived here; it had a small kitchen consisting of a fridge, an oven, a countertop and

a microwave. There was a bathroom, but with no running water unfortunately. A single bedroom with a double bed was in the flat while a couch sat in front of a tiny television in a room that joined up with the kitchen. A large table with ammunition, medical equipment and empty food cans, sat by itself in the middle of the last room in the flat. The colour of the walls was a sickly beige while there were a few paintings hung up on the wall. The light in the bedroom and the sitting room lights did not work so a lamp in each room had to suffice as a light source, making those rooms slightly darker and really, a bit more relaxing than the other rooms.

Ellis was led over to the couch so someone could check on his arm. Rochelle went to the bathroom to inspect herself in front of the mirror. Coach, Louis, Francis and Nick sat at the table, having a rather awkward conversation.

Ellis was exhausted. He didn't know what time it was but it was very dark outside so he guessed it was around 8 or so. Today had been an eventful day, to say the least.

Zoey walked in holding a first aid kit and gave him a smile. Ellis was expected himself to get nervous but he didn't feel it. Perhaps it was because he was just so tired. She sat down beside him. "I'm gonna check on your arm if that's okay with you." Ellis gave her a grin. "Of course ma'am. Work away." Zoey giggled at how she called him "ma'am" but continued. His arm looked bruised at the place she expected it was broken. Ellis noticed how nice and soft her touch was. She unzipped the first aid and took out the cold spray and began applying to the area to reduce the swelling. The spray smelled weird. She then took out some bandages and began wrapping his arm which Ellis had to hiss and curse to himself every time she rolled it around his arm. When she was done, she left the room momentarily and brought back some pain pills and some bottled water. The mechanic swallowed the pills before taking a swig out of the bottle and handing it back to her. "Thanks a bunch ma'am, awful kind of you." Ellis remarked as Zoey gave him a grin. "Don't worry about it Ellis." She replied. "Oh and call me Zoey." The young woman added with a laugh.

"Understood, _Zoey._"

It might have been the light but he doubted it, but right there and then, Ellis swore to himself that this girl was the most beautiful he had ever seen. She was so amazing, and she was a deadshot with a gun too. "You look tired Ellis; you can sleep in the bed tonight." Zoey said as she stood up. "Um okay, thanks!" Ellis responded. She showed him where the bedroom was. "Are you sure I can sleep in here? I could take the couch if you wanted." Zoey shook her head. "It's fine Ellis." Ellis strolled in before he almost collapsed on the bed. "Thanks Zoey, thanks for saving my ass today." He commented as she brushed a brown strand of hair behind her ear. "It's nothing. I was hardly going to leave you down there now was I?" She replied with a laugh. "Yeah I guess, night Zoey." She smiled at him "Goodnight Ellis." She closed the door behind her.

Ellis kicked off his work boots and hopped out of his worksuit. He placed his cap on the bedside table and climbed into the bed before turning off the lamp.

Now in complete darkness, the young man thought about his day, from

being abandoned by CEDA, to kicking zombie ass, to meeting plenty of new friends, to stealing Jimmy Gibbs Jr.'s stock car to meeting the most beautiful girl he had ever seen. Even with these nice thoughts, Ellis drifted off into a world of nightmares.

He dreamt about everyone he loved and was close to him had become infected.

And he did nothing to help them

8. Doubts

Hey guys, its Yobloc20 here. I had this big plan on how the story went and I was happy with it but now I am thinking up of all these new ideas of how the story could go and I'm sort of confused whether I stick to the plan or I change plot of the story (No heavy changes just gradually ease it towards the new plot.) For the risk of it possibly being better. I don't knowâ€¦ I'll think about it. Favourite, Review and Enjoy! Valve owns all characters._

****Chapter 8: Doubts****

Zoey quietly shut the bedroom door behind her as she left Ellis to get some rest. She thought Ellis was a really nice guy and a gentleman. His accent was pretty funny too. She walked back into the main room where Francis and Coach were now finally having a free-flowing conversation about their favourite band. She was a bit surprised that Coach listened to rock but Zoey had learned to never judge a book by its cover. Nick just sat there, disinterested in the conversation, fiddling with one of his rings in his hand. Rochelle had returned from the bathroom and was now leaning against the wall, smirking to herself about the conversation that was unfolding in front of her. Louis had moved himself into the sitting room and was now relaxing on the couch by himself. Zoey then began to wonder about who was going to sleep where.

When it was just the three of them, the system was pretty clear. Louis would usually get the bed and whoever wasn't on watch would take the couch. Now there were seven. Ellis had already gone to bed by her orders; she estimated that two people could manage to sleep on the couch, in a sitting position. That left four. She doubted anybody would share the bed with someone else as it wasn't big enough for two people to spend the night without making contact. Minus the one person that would be on watch, that left three people sleeping rough on the floor.

Zoey sighed to herself; maybe they could look for sleeping bags or airbeds tomorrow.

"So you're telling me you've never heard of the Midnight Riders?!" Coach remarked in near outrage. "Shit, you said you know good music!" Zoey was sure she had heard that name before somewhere but she couldn't remember where. She just listened in on Coach and Francis' debate, until she saw Nick gesturing her over to him.

She strolled over to him before he gestured for her to come closer. Zoey leaned down to the conman.

"How's Ellis holding up?" He questioned with concern on his hush

voice.

"He's fine. He's resting in the bedroom." Zoey answered. Nick nodded before continuing "How's his arm?"

"It might be broken; I'm not 100 percent sure." She replied.

Nick gave her a look of disbelief. "Broken? Fuck." Is all he could mutter before leaning back in his chair, ending the conversation.

Francis rose from his seat and stretched his back. "I suggest we get some rest. We got a big day tomorrow." He declared. He then began to wonder the same question as Zoey had earlier. "Who's sleeping where?" Zoey stood up and began assigning people as she planned. "Two people can take the couch; Ellis is in the bed and one person on watch." She stated. "Rochelle can have the couch with Louis." Francis offered. Rochelle was about to debate the decision when she realised that she needed a good night's rest and dropped it. "Thanks." She responded with a smile to Francis, one in which he returned. "I'll keep watch. I won't be able to sleep tonight anyway." Nick mumbled, eyes looking at the floor. That left Coach, Francis and Zoey who already knew they were the unlucky one's who got the floor. "Wake me up when you want to get some sleep, I'll take over then." Francis explained to Nick. Francis didn't really mind sleeping on the ground too much; he had slept in worse places.

Zoey walked into the sitting room and lay down in the corner. She unzipped her jacket and rolled it up into a ball, using it as a pillow. Francis sat against the wall in the main room, arms crossed. He looked ready to jump up and attack intruders at any time during the night. Coach was already panned out on the floor and on the way to his slumber, the big man was exhausted after a day of fighting and the uncomfortable floor didn't seem to bother him much. Nick had pulled a chair over to the window, watching the light rain run down it. He had his AK-47 Rifle in his lap, a bottle of water in his hands.

The lights were switched off. The place was pitch dark besides the slight moonlight which reflected through the windows. The only noise was the low breathing of the survivors and the weak raindrops against the building.

Nick sighed to himself; he needed this time to think. So much had happened in one day which started on top of a burning hotel, watching helicopters which were meant to save him buzz off into little dots the distance. Strange to think that it was ending in an oddly relaxing flat with three people he barely knew and three people he didn't know at all. In a way, he was glad he had met these guys. They weren't **all **awful. Truth is, Nick would be dead if he had gone his separate way like he planned to back at the hotel. He wondered why he had to go to Savannah. Why he didn't go to Vegas or Atlantic City for the apocalypse, instead, he was stuck in a river port town with six people that were still very much strangers to him but he had to trust them with his life.

"_Crazy, fucking world we live in now._" He thought to himself with a smirk as he got himself ready for a long night.

_"_Why did you let me go Zoey? You should have sacrificed

yourself!"_

_"__Bill please! I'm so sorry! I miss you, please come back!"_

_"__You let me die, you coward. I could have lived. But you let me go."_

_"__I'm sorry Bill! I-I am so sorry-_

_"__Sorry isn't going to bring me back you coward__. I'm dead because of __**you**__."_

_"__I-I didn't know you were going to-_

_"__It's too late Zoey. I'm dead because of you. I am never coming back because of you. It's your entire fault."_

_"__Bill no!"_

_"__Bill!"_

"Bill!"

Zoey realised she was now awake. "It was just a nightmare." She assured herself over and over, trying to hold the tears back which were now streaming down her face. It was the same goddamn nightmare every time. But she would always hate herself a little bit after it even though she knew there was nothing she could have done. She lay her head back down against her jacket and took a few deep breaths, attempting to regain her composure. She had to calm down.

Zoey found herself getting up and quietly crept out of the sitting room into the main room. There was Nick, who snapped a look at Zoey, he saw the small, slim figure and knew immediately who it was.

"What are you doing?" He questioned roughly. "I'm going to the bathroom." She answered. Nick nodded and turned back to the window. Zoey thread lightly down the hall and past the bedroom, and then into the small bathroom. There were no windows in the bathroom so she could turn on the light and she closed the door behind her.

She walked over to the mirror and examined herself, battered and bruised. Her eyes were red from crying. She looked awful. She reset her ponytail and looked into her own eyes in the mirror.

"_Get your shit together, Zoey._"

She leaned back against the wall and slid down it, hugging her knees. She just needed to be alone. She decided to get her mind off of Bill by thinking about the new people. She was happy they were with them. She was relieved actually. It was important that she warned them to stay away from the military now that they were with them. She couldn't live with herself if she let them go to their uninspected deaths. She liked them a lot; they seemed like decent people that can pull their own weight.

She rose to her feet again and left the bathroom, turning off the light behind her and began sneaking back to the sitting room.

Nick saw Zoey pass by again but didn't say anything this time as she snuck into the sitting room. Nick had heard her earlier, when she was in the sitting room. She was mumbling in her sleep. Nick guessed that she was probably having a nightmare. She most likely lost someone close to her, like everyone in the apocalypse had. Except for Nick, he never got close to anyone, never made long term friendships or relationships. He had made that mistake when he got married. Biggest mistake of his life. He wondered where she was now.

"_Probably a witch._" He thought to himself with a smirk.

He gazed back out the window and lost himself in thought.

Coach was the first to wake up. He had slept soundly enough, his neck was extremely sore from being in an uncomfortable position for so long. He rubbed his eyes and gazed over at Francis, who was now inspecting his Pump-Action Shotgun. He and Nick had traded places during the night as planned as he saw Nick panned out on the ground, facing the wall. Coach audibly yawned as he didn't want to end up with a belly full of lead for startling the biker. Francis gave a quick look at Coach and turned back again. "Morning Coach." Francis said a bit quietly, not to wake up the others. "Morning, any problems over the night?" Francis shook his head. "Nope, dead quiet." Coach nodded and walked over to the table, taking a seat before rubbing his groggy eyes again. "Any idea what time it is?" Coach asked as he picked up his gun holster which was on the table and clicked it back into place around his waist. "I don't know, around nine-ish?" Francis replied with a shrug. There was a brief pause before Coach continued "Should I get the others up?" Francis turned his head to look at him and nodded "Probably is a good idea."

It was a new day. A new day in the apocalypse. A day the survivors could not take for granted as any day could be their last.

9. Day by day

Hey guys, its Yobloc20 here. The story is moving along nicely I have to say. I now know where the story is going and I can concentrate on that now which is helpful. Favourite, Review and Enjoy! Valve owns all the characters.

**Chapter 9: Day by day **

Getting everyone to get up was a difficult task. Coach got moans, groans and "Five more minutes" but eventually, the group trudged into the kitchen one-by-one still half asleep. They were low on food, only around ten or eleven cans of food left over. Rochelle kept getting the suspicion that they were taking too much from this group of three. She didn't want to become a burden on this group now that Ellis needed medical attention for his arm. She wanted to prove to this group that they were more than capable to pull their own weight and be an asset to the people that had took them in. She thought about this while eating cold beans from a can.

Ellis was the last to get up, he strolled into the main room where all the survivors were eating their 'breakfast' and muttered "Morning y'all." He was directed to a seat at the table with a can of summer fruits. It wouldn't have been the mechanic's ideal breakfast but beggars can't be choosers.

There was a silence in the room which no one really seemed to mind. Everyone was too busy wolfing down their meal to have a conversation. Everyone was clearly hungry but they needed to find more food today. All were starving after the previous day of fighting. Francis was the first to finish as he put his tin down and looked around the room. "What's the plan for today, people?" The biker questioned with a mouthful of whatever he was eating. "A few of us could go to town and look for food or ammo." Suggested Louis. "And medical equipment for Ellis and Louis." Rochelle added in, still concerned about both men's health.

"It shouldn't take the whole group to get that stuff." Zoey stated as she ate the last of her cold spaghetti hoops. "We should send three or four to get supplies and that." The group sorted themselves as to who was doing what. Coach, Nick and Zoey would go into the town on a supply run while Francis and Rochelle would see the extent of the damage to the Jimmy Gibbs and then search down by the docks for anything useful. Ellis and Louis however, were forced to stay at the flat.

Louis let out a sigh. He was always stuck in this flat. At least he would have Ellis to talk to this time. Ellis seemed to have the same opinion "Ah no! I'll be fine! I could like try to-" Ellis tried to protest with the others but was met by a round of 'no's'. Ellis slumped back in his chair, deflated. He always wanted to be where the action was, he was never one to sit out on the chance of some fun. The others wouldn't exactly have called it fun.

The group started to get up and getting their equipment together for the day, Ellis and Louis watching on in a tiny bit of envy as their fellow survivors retrieved their weapons and started moving for the door, stocked and ready for their respective tasks. "We're going to take the ladder down, we'll yell up at you guys when we're back." Francis explained to the two injured men.

Nick took a look back at Ellis with a smirk, sensing the envy from the young man and said "Hey Ellis, we'll bring you back a toy if you behave okay?" The group started laughing as Ellis's face turned slightly red out of embarrassment and an unusual frown appeared on his face. "Ha ha, very funny." He commented, trying to defend himself. And with the sound of the survivors chuckling to themselves as they closed the door behind them, they were gone.

Ellis looked over at Louis who was covering his huge smile. "You too?" Ellis questioned as Louis burst into laughter. "He got you good man." He said in between laughs. Ellis shook his head and gave a small grin.

"Okay it was a _little _funny."

The two men shared a chuckle with each other before a content silence before Ellis shuffled forward on his seat and propped his elbows on the table. "So how did you meet your friends?" Ellis questioned, a little bit nervous that it might be a sensitive issue. Louis took a slight pause before clearing his throat. "Emm, I met up with Francis at this city not too long after the first outbreak and ehheh." He paused again and looked to be in thought before sighing. "And we met this other guy Bill not too long later." He said, his voice sounded drained of the earlier optimism. Ellis added two plus two and

realized this 'Bill' guy was no longer around. "You don't have to tell me if you don't want." Ellis stated as he gazed at Louis.

He shook his head and took a breath. "It's okay." He said with a small smile before continuing "We decided to stick together and we tried so many goddamn times to get away from all this, we eventually thought we were saved by the military but they tried to kill us and we escaped. Long story short, we decided to get up on this here bridge so we could think a plan out, we were about to raise the bridge and it broke down halfway. We were going to die"

Ellis's eyes were wide open listening to the story.

"And it was Bill who jumped down to his certain death. He ran back and turned the generator back on, knowing well he wasn't going to make it back. He saved our lives and I am forever in his debt."

Ellis was too shocked to reply. He tried to but only a weird sound from the back of his throat came out. He composed himself. "Wow. Sorry Louis. I didn't know..." Louis shook his head again. "It's okay Ellis. I miss Bill but I have to stay strong and move on. I'll never forget him though." Ellis nodded as a guilty silence washed over them.

"Zoey was affected the worst." Louis said glumly, breaking the silence. "How do you mean?" Ellis replied. "She saw him almost as a father; we don't mention him around her. I advise you do the same." Louis warned. Ellis nodded again, still in shock. The silence was back again.

The silence was much longer this time. Perhaps a minute or two before Ellis made his best attempt to cheer the man up. "Did I ever tell ya 'bout the time my buddy Keith and I set up a lawnmower bumper-car ride in Keith's back yard? Mower blade wounds over ninety percent of his body. I didn't even run him over; he somehow managed to fall under his own."

Louis cracked into a quiet laugh which gradually got louder the more he thought about it. "How did he manage to fall under his own?" Louis was barely able to say from laughing. Ellis shrugged and gave a grin. "Dunno, Keith has been through worse though." Louis looked at the mechanic in disbelief "Wait, how did he do worse than that?!" Louis enquired.

Ellis flicked through his mind at all of Keith's misadventures and took his pick.

Francis and Rochelle stared at the overturned stock car. Ellis would be heartbroken to see his dream car like this. "Wow, that tank beat the shit into it." Francis commented, still looking at the car. "Yup. It's broken alright." Rochelle replied with gloom in her voice, annoyed at herself for giving herself false hope that the car would be in any way salvageable. "We got to find another way to New Orleans." She sighed. Francis shrugged as he looked around them for any lurking infected. "You could stay with us. In Rayford. Forever." Francis joked as Rochelle gave him a questionable look and a smirk.

"Yeah! I wanna stay in this crappy town with a biker and his crappy

vest." Rochelle replied with a giggle. "You hate my vest? Sorry, this isn't going to work out." Francis remarked and they both laughed.

"So, shall we go check out these docks then?" Rochelle asked.

"Alright, race you there!" Francis said with a smirk. "Boy, you can't be for real." Rochelle responded with a laugh.

The pair headed in the direction of the docks in cheery form. The grey sky started to look less depressing as the survivors could be happy that it wasn't raining for a change.

Maybe things will change.

End
file.